



Allandale Neighbor

Apr 2014
Vol 29, Issue 2

DISTRIBUTED TO MORE THAN 4,500 HOMES BY THE ALLANDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Birders in Allandale

Steve Johnson

While John James Audubon might have pioneered the idea of focusing intently on birds, much has changed about bird watching since the early 1900s (when many bird “watchers” were actually more interested in collecting specimens than conservation). One thing that has not changed is the way people feel about these wonderful animals. Audubon once said about birds that “I felt an intimacy with them . . . bordering on frenzy [that] must accompany my steps through life.” Some of your neighbors in Allandale have very similar passions about our feathered friends.

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“Before You Sign” – Deed Restrictions 101

Allandale Zoning Committee

It happens. Someone knocks at your door, asking you to sign a form giving them permission to subdivide a property in Allandale.

Here are seven things you should know before you sign.

Q: The person at the door mentioned “restrictions” on the property. What are these restrictions?

A: When Allandale was initially developed, the neighborhood was designed with certain property restrictions known as “covenants” or deed restrictions on the land that include prohibitions against subdividing properties within Allandale into separate, smaller lots. Other specific

restrictions include setback requirements, single story height, residential use, and utility easement details, among others.

Q: What is the purpose of covenants/deed restrictions?

A: Deed restrictions were intended to develop a community with specific requirements that allowed reasonable use of properties, while creating a reasonably consistent framework for the neighborhood. The restrictions are recorded in the Travis County Clerk’s Office, and are made known to anyone purchasing land to which the restrictions apply.

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The Annual Allandale Garage Sale will be held May 3. For more info, see article on page 17 or ad on the back page.

The next ANA EC Meeting will be held on May 7 at 7 p.m. at the NW Rec Center, and is open to the public.

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Slaughter and Nathan Vassar
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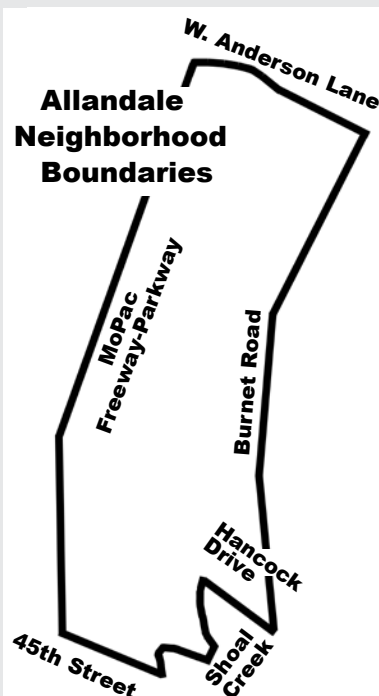
ANA General Meetings are held March and September on the first Wednesday of the month at NW Rec Center.

Committees

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FINANCE Caroline Reynolds
MEMBERSHIP Jeff Marshall
NOMINATING Kata Carbone
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ZONING AND PLANNING Bryan Glass

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APD Region 2 District Rep (serves Allandale south of Hancock): Ofc. Josh Metteauer, 974-8124, joshua.metteauer@austintexas.gov



ANA President's Letter

David Mintz

It is a busy time for the neighborhood association. There are a number of ongoing issues. At the top of our list are the continuing challenges of the developers at 5415 Woodview and 5111 Woodview who have sought to re-subdivide their respective lots without following deed restrictions (see related article).

Also, we have been working with neighbors and the city to go through the review process and seek approval for the implementation of residential permit parking on area streets near the new Little Woodrow's at 5425 Burnet. The process is finally going smoothly, and the permit parking program is expected to be in place by the time Little Woodrow's opens later this year.

In addition, the CodeNEXT committee, chaired by Allan McMurtry, is working to seek neighborhood feedback and make sure our community's interests are represented during the massive overhaul of Austin's land development code. While the project is not expected to be approved until 2016, the potential impact that this will have is massive and it is crucial that ANA have a voice in the process.

As of the press deadline, the Executive Committee is scheduled to take a position on three proposed commercial re-zoning requests at the eastern end of Northland.

ANA is also closely watching plans for a new parking garage that Charles Maund Volkswagen will be building on Burnet Road and its impact on the neighborhood.

We have recently met with the owner of the new Yard Bar dog park and restaurant that will be opening at the site of the

old Putt Putt golf course, particularly about concerns about how traffic will flow in and out of the site.

We're also planning a graffiti cleanup day soon, the neighborhood garage sale on May 3, and the Fourth of July parade.

We have a great team of volunteers but can always use help. If you are interested in a committee or particular project, please drop me an email at dmintztx@yahoo.com (please put ANA in the subject line) or give me a call at 512-626-0113.

It is great to see some new businesses coming into the neighborhood and surrounding area. Sap's Thai Food in the Allandale Shopping Center was packed a few weeks ago when we went for dinner and there seems to be a lot of excitement about Noble Sandwich and Peached Tortilla. Whether you're going to one of our new additions or visiting old favorites like the Frisco Shop or Phil's, supporting businesses in our area helps keep it local and support our community.

Finally, I'd like to give special thanks to Angela Caras, who has edited the Allandale Neighbor for the past year and will be stepping down after this issue (although she will be continue to volunteer). Our newsletter is one of the most valuable resources we have to help neighbors keep in touch about what is happening in our neighborhood area and I want to thank Angela, as well as Cathy Savage, who works on layout and ad sales, for all of their work. ❖



David Mintz

The *Allandale Neighbor* is published and distributed bimonthly by the ANA. For more information call the editor at 512-348-8237 or allandaleneighbor@gmail.com.

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Recent EC Action

David Mintz

Shoal Creek Conservancy

At the March general meeting, Joanne Wolaver from the Shoal Creek Conservancy gave a presentation on the organization's goals of restoring and protecting Shoal Creek. More information about the group can be found at www.shoalcreekconservancy.org.

Safe Rides to School

There was also a presentation by Nate

Wilkins from the City of Austin's bicycle program about plans to make it safer for students riding bicycles to Gullett Elementary School and Lamar Middle School. While several options are being considered, there are no firm plans at this time and Wilkins committed to letting the neighborhood association know before anything is finalized. It is possible that something may be in place before the start of the 2014–2015 school year, if a plan can be developed and funding identified.

New Secretary and Communications Chairs

At the February Executive Committee meeting Jeff Marshall was elected by the EC to take over the role of Secretary, which was vacated by Laura Beck, who will remain on the Executive Committee and take over the role of Communications Chair for Joi Chavalier, who recently stepped down from her position. Thanks to Joi for all of her work over the last several years for our neighborhood. ❖

Austin Camera & Imaging Carries on Proud Photo Finishing Tradition

David Carrales

Does the jingle “Fox Photo ... quick as a fox!” ring a bell? In the late 1980s, while attending college, I had black and white film developed and photographs printed at a Fox Photo retail store in the shopping center at Burnet and North Loop.

That Fox Photo retail store could trace its origins to the Fox Company which started in San Antonio, Texas at the turn of the twentieth century. By the roaring twenties, the Fox Company was the largest mail order photo finishing operation in the world. The Fox Company would later morph into Fox Photo, Inc. Fox Photo, Inc. established one-hour photo processing kiosks in shopping mall parking lots throughout the nation.

In 2001, Fox Photo Inc. was bought by Wolf Camera. Within a year, Wolf Camera became Ritz Camera. By that time, the Fox Photo retail store off Burnet and North Loop was long gone,

and the closest Ritz Camera to the Allandale neighborhood was at HEB Central Market on North Lamar. Not too long ago, Ritz Camera closed its doors. On the heels of the Ritz store's closing, Precision Camera relocated from 38th and Lamar to Anderson Lane, leaving a void in businesses that focus primarily on the sale of camera equipment and photo finishing services in central Austin.

As a hobbyist photographer, I was hoping that someday another full service camera and photo finishing store would return to the neighborhood. Last October, I was thrilled to see a new tenant, Austin Camera & Imaging, set up shop in the new residential/retail building at 5350 Burnet Road, Suite 8.

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New Allandale Neighborhood Association EC Member Profiles

Last newsletter, you met four of your eleven ANA EC members, in your service until Sept 2014: Laura Beck, Kata Carbone, Caroline Reynolds and Nathan Vassar. Now, we'd like you to meet a few more!

Bryan Glass, EC



General Editor of The British Scholar Society, Lecturer, Texas State University

Moved to Allandale from Chicago nearly 10 years ago with my wife to begin a PhD at UT. Proud father of two boys. Originally from Columbus, Ohio. Allandale reminds me of my grandparents' neighborhood there.

What I love best about Allandale: The feel of the neighborhood, a nice leafy suburb of the city that is still very close to downtown. Allandale gives Austin charm.

My favorite time in Allandale is being outside playing with my kids in our backyard. I love the family-friendly nature of Allandale and I am dedicated to protecting it.

Steve Neel, EC

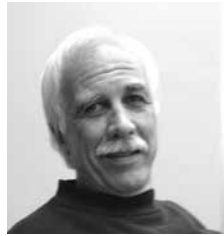
Attorney

Married with one daughter. We have three cats, one of them is Gully, the school cat at Gullett.

Hometown is Port Arthur, Texas. I was born in Austin, but grew up in Port Arthur. Lived in Allandale since 2005.

What I love best about Allandale: I love the Fourth of July parade. I enjoy walking the neighborhood.

My favorite time in Allandale: fall, I



particularly enjoy Halloween in the neighborhood.

Cynthia Pryor, EC

Systems Analyst for Texas Department of State Health Services, WIC Program, 15 years

Married with two cats. Grew up in Georgetown, TX. Has seen the Austin metro area explode! Lived in Allandale for 15 years.

What I love best about Allandale: the laid-back, friendly atmosphere

My favorite time in Allandale: the fall, when the heat of summer is past and it's pleasurable to take an evening walk again! ❖



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Austin Camera & Imaging Carries on Proud Photo Finishing Tradition

Continued from page 3

Austin Camera & Imaging offers a wide range of new, used, and vintage cameras, along with a full-service photo lab that specializes in digital imaging and film development and everything in-between, including video editing and transfers, photo restorations, and photography classes. Their goal is to offer a choice for camera equipment purchases and photographic services in a boutique store environment for the greater Austin region. In an effort to build community, the Austin Camera & Imaging provides gallery space within the store that features the work of local photographers.

Over the course of six months, I've made many trips to Austin Camera & Imaging and had great conversations with the knowledgeable and friendly staff. When I recognized one of the lab technicians from the old Ritz Camera working there, I was informed that most of the equipment in the store was purchased when the Ritz Camera at HEB Central Market went out of business. When I got to thinking about that statement, I remembered that old Fox Retail store on Burnet and North Loop. Although the original Fox Retail store had changed names, moved, and then ultimately dis-

appeared, its spirit is alive and well at Austin Camera & Imaging.

Austin Camera & Imaging has a lot to offer photographers of all skill level and interests. Customers can have digital prints made from wallet size to poster size and negative film developed and printed (35 mm and 120/220 mm). They offer canvas and metallic prints as well as photo books, greeting cards, and photo collages. Austin Camera & Imaging has printed my digital files up to 11 x 14, printed black and white film negatives with a sepia tone, and even scanned a few of my favorite film negatives so I could work with them in a digital format.

I encourage you to visit Austin Camera & Imaging. You will be greeted warmly and provided excellent, personal service from Matt, Aaron, Alan, or David. Austin Camera & Imaging is open Monday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., and Sunday noon – 6:00 p.m. Free parking is available in the garage at 5350 Burnet. Their website, <http://austincamera.com/>, contains a link for customers to upload their photos for printing. Customers can also use kiosks on-site to upload their photos for printing. ❖

The Dot Exercise: CodeNEXT Community Character in a Box

Tom Linehan

It is hard to get a definitive reading on what people think about the neighborhood from Allandale's CodeNEXT Community Character in a Box exercise that took place on a Wednesday evening at the Northwest Recreation Center in mid-March because it was a tiny gathering. Only eleven people showed, including myself. Four were members of Allandale's Land Development Code Committee, the ones who organized the meeting. It was an enjoyable meeting nevertheless, as we spent most of the time visiting and conferring on the good and bad of the neighborhood, but mostly the good.

A large map of Allandale was laid out on the table for people to dot and make comments on. Red dots are bad; green are good; and blue sig-

nify what's desired. As people walked in they were given instructions and left on their own to dot and comment on the map. There was no filtering or prioritization process. The result was a visual on the attendees' perception of Allandale. As you can see from the list below, most of the 35 dots placed on the map were green. That's good. We love Allandale. There were five red dots and eight blue ones. I wanted to put a red dot on my house with a comment about ever-increasing property taxes however if everyone with the same concern did that it would have turned the map from green to red. It was noted that the Allandale map given to us to work on had the southern portion of the neighborhood

Continued on page 6

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The Dot Exercise: CodeNEXT Community Character in a Box

Continued from page 5

(south of Hancock) lopped off. I am not aware of any vote taken by that section of the neighborhood to secede. This is a persistent error by the Planning & Development Review Department that requires City Council action to correct.

The Character in a Box exercise is being carried out by neighborhoods throughout the city as part of the City's Land Development Code rewrite. This phase of the process is designed to document the characteristics of individual neighborhoods. The map will be returned to CodeNEXT along with photos that capture the community's character. CodeNEXT will be using the information to compare similarities and differences among neighborhoods, learn about each neighborhood's distinctive qualities, "create a citywide Community Character Manual to visually tell a story of each area," and facilitate future planning efforts. What follows are the results from Allandale's meeting:

GREEN dot = Assets (strengths),
BLUE dot = Opportunities for improvement, and RED dot = Constraints (weaknesses)

Participant Comments:

BLUE: [east of RR tracks, between West Anderson Lane and Foster Lane] A train station and neighborhood center here will need significant street change to work; currently hard to get in and out of this location.

BLUE: [Great Northern Boulevard] Need sidewalk on the west side along the entire length of Great Northern Boulevard.

BLUE: [commercial area between West Anderson Lane, Foster Lane, Great Northern Boulevard & Shoal Creek Boulevard] Need less cement, more green; improve walkability and protect pedestrians.

BLUE: [6400 Burnet Road] Burnet Road Self Storage. This large property is more than half a mile from the rapid bus stations. It's right next to Lamar Middle School. It would be ideal for "missing middle" housing compatible demographically with other area residents.

BLUE: [Whiterock Drive between Bulard and Wynona] Need bike lane.

BLUE: Need a little park south of Northland Drive.

BLUE: [Shoal Creek waterway, between West Anderson Lane and 45th Street] The creek is the heart of Allandale: wildlife, trees, greenspace. It needs erosion control, greenbelt restoration, and hiking trail access. It needs removal of invasive species and homeless encampments.

BLUE: [Throughout Allandale] All streets need sidewalks.

GREEN: [Great Northern Boulevard] Not a through street (a good thing); keep Great Northern Boulevard separated from MoPac and Anderson Lane.

GREEN: [Great Northern Boulevard] Shaded trail and bicycle lane, access to park.

GREEN: [6900 Great Northern Boulevard, between Pinecrest and Stoneway] Love the Great Northern Boulevard Detention Pond greenspace. Heritage trees, springs, open space, wildlife, birds, community space, overlook, trail.

GREEN: [7858 Shoal Creek Boulevard] Love Suzi's.

GREEN: [2917 West Anderson Lane] Love Fresh Plus Grocery; serves us well.



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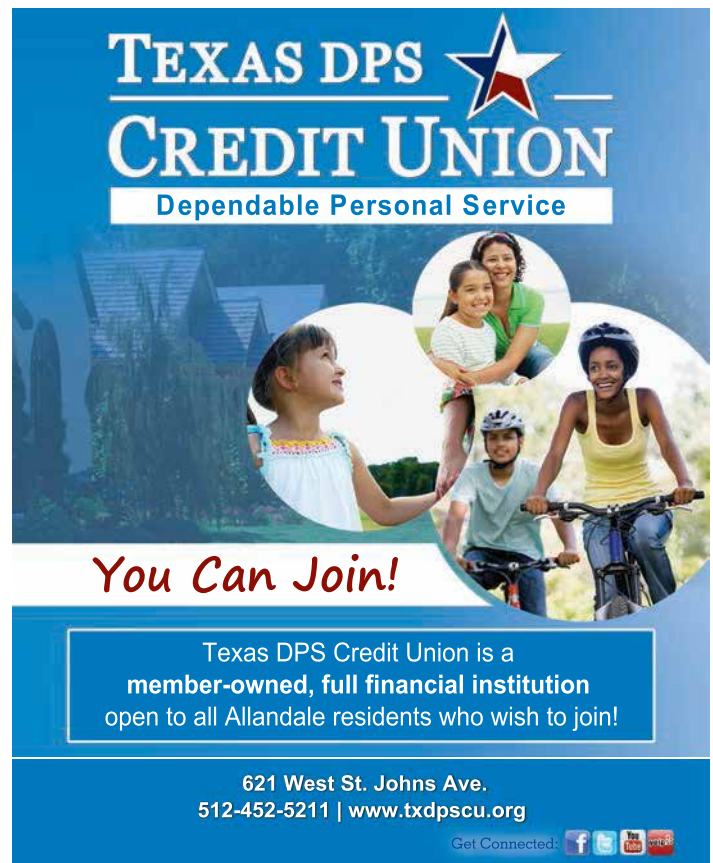


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GREEN: [2608 Richcreek] Love Lucy Read School and Park; greenspace, soccer field, limited access for children.

GREEN: [7000 Ardath Street] Love Beverly S. Sheffield Northwest District Park. Many heritage trees, green, shade, plants, wildlife, pond, springs. Ball fields are a great asset; ball fields and part of the park are floodplain.

GREEN: [Greenlawn Parkway] Tree canopy street, heat island mitigation.

GREEN: [Vine Street] Heritage trees: massive oaks on Vine.

GREEN: [6500 block of Vine Street, between Cavileer and Twin Oaks] George W. Davis Cemetery, an important, sacred landmark.

GREEN: [6201 Wynona] Lamar Middle School & Fine Arts Academy, grades 6-8, great walking track.

GREEN: [6310 Treadwell Boulevard] Gullett Elementary School, outstanding K through fifth grade school.

GREEN: [3105 Hunt Trail] Northwest

Little League field adjacent to Gullett Elementary School, great ball fields for children and neighborhood.

GREEN: Lamar Middle School & Fine Arts Academy, grades 6-8, great walking track.

GREEN: Gullett Elementary School, outstanding K-5 grade school.

GREEN: [Cary and Nasco between White Rock and Allandale Road] Large lots and heritage trees attract families and long-term residents.

GREEN: [5808 Burnet Road] HEB in the Allandale Village shopping center is a great, walkable asset.

GREEN: [2913 Northland Dive] Love Northwest Recreation Center. There's a spring in the

northwest corner.

GREEN: [2710 Hancock Drive] Love Shoal Creek Nursery.

GREEN: [Shoal Creek greenbelt between Northland and Bull Creek Road] Needs massive invasive species removal. There's a spring-fed bioswale.

GREEN: [Along Burnet Road] Affordable small business lease space.

GREEN: [Throughout Allandale] Streets that wind and dead-end into other streets without going through to thor-

oughfare.

GREEN: [Throughout Allandale] Large single-family lots, large shade trees.

GREEN: [Throughout Allandale] Retain current single-family zoning and lot sizes, enforce McMansion restrictions.

RED: [Burnet Road between Addison and Twin Oaks] Recent businesses conflict with family-friendly character: (1) Adult toy store; (2) Outdoor dog bar; (3) Liquor store.

RED: [Great Northern Boulevard] Relocate homeless and stop panhandling.

RED: [Northcross Mall] This area is zoned for VMU, but there is no long-term circulation plan (street grid). Detention pond is an eyesore. This creek has capacity to do a permanent wetlands facility.

RED: [5350 Burnet Road] AMLI Apartments: development without infrastructure improvements to accommodate it (greenspace, water/wastewater, traffic) south of Koenig Lane.

RED: [Shoal Creek waterway, between Twin Oaks and 45th Street] Needs regular removal of debris, trash, vegetation.

General question: What changes to code does Allandale need that will protect our strengths [green dots] and eliminate our weaknesses [red dots]? ❖

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ANA Files Suit Against Homebuilder, Developer

David Mintz

At the March general meeting, more than fifty members in attendance voted unanimously to file suit against two developers who have sought to re-subdivide lots for development without first meeting deed restriction requirements.

The action was not taken lightly. ANA had previously warned the developers that the association would be forced to take action if the owners of the two properties, located at 5415/5417 Woodview and 5111 Woodview continued forward with plans without receiving the required approval.

In the Shoalmont II subdivision, which is within Allandale's neighborhood association boundaries, under a 1982 amendment to the deed restrictions, at least two-thirds of residential property owners must approve any lot re-subdivision.

The deed restrictions have been upheld in previous challenges. In late March, ANA was successful in obtaining a temporary restraining order against the developer of 5415/5417 Woodview, Madison Custom Homes in Round Rock. As of the press deadline, a temporary injunction hearing is scheduled to be held on April 16 at 9:00 a.m.

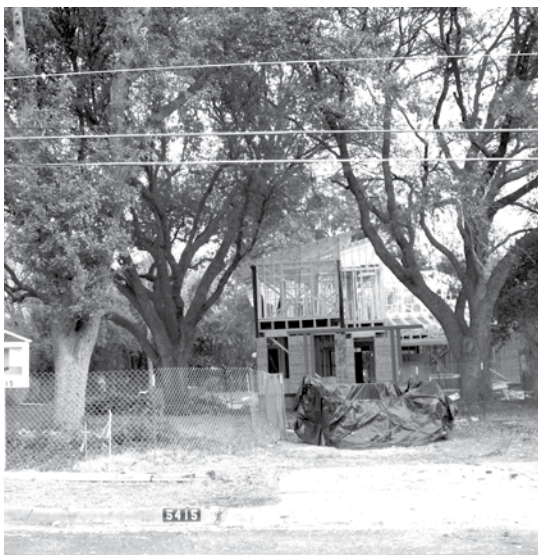
The membership also approved seeking action against Jules Caplan, who owns the lot at 5111 Woodview.

In both cases, objections were raised before the Zoning and Platting Commission when the re-subdivisions cases were heard. However, it is the city's position that enforcement of deed restrictions is a private matter and could not be taken into account in their decision making process.

ANA sent notification to both property owners in advance of taking formal legal action. with the hope of being able to resolve

the cases without the need for going to court, but in both cases the property owners did not respond.

If ANA prevails, the association will be able to recover legal fees. The initial cost of filing both cases, is coming from association reserves. However, ANA is also accepting donations to its legal fund to pay off the remaining debt owed to the attorney who represented ANA against Walmart, as well as this effort. Updates on these cases while be posted on the ANA Facebook page and website. ❖



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Let's Play Ball! Kickball!

Laura Beck

Kickball? Spring means baseball, softball, lacrosse. Even spring soccer, and flag football. But kickball? Not until I moved to Austin did I have any idea that kickball went beyond a recess game on school playgrounds. Here in Austin, NWA Kickball (Northwest Austin Kickball), a member of Little Miss Kickball International, has been getting girls of all ages kicking since 1978. No doubt there are three generations of Allandale “girls” who played NWA, and the 2014 season kicked off (pun intended) just weeks ago.

Girls start playing in peeewee as young as four years old. If you keep playing in NWA Kickball, you can play until you are 18 years old. (And I've seen women's leagues, grown-

ups my age, out on those fields playing, so skilled and aggressive it scares me a little.)

A total of 36 teams meet up every night of the week for 10 weeks over at the NWA Kickball fields by Murchison Middle school. Older girls play a 16-game season with winners of their division going onto the Little Miss Kickball State All Star tournaments in July. Parents get really involved too, as coaches, team moms, score keepers, field markers, umpires, and even concession stand workers.

While this kickball thing is fairly unique to Austin, it's pretty neat to see what it does

for girls in terms of teaching them a sport with rules, growing and refining athletic skills, learning team play, and listening to coaches. The spirit and enthusiasm at each game is strong, with lots of cheering from the dugout and the stands. Teams are built of girls from

different schools and neighborhoods, especially once you hit juniors, and teams are stocked from a draft to encourage skills parity.

More than the skills –and exercise!– that comes from playing kickball, it is the mem-

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Let's Play Ball! Kickball!

Continued from page 9

ories made that is the reason moms who played themselves bring their own daughters to NWA Kickball.

Allandale Leah Jenkins played NWA Kickball from first grade to the end of middle school. Her daughter is now a pee wee player. Leah says, "Watching my daughter play on the same fields I played on is extremely nostalgic. Only two things have changed in its 25 plus years: the

concession stand moved (and doesn't sell Fun Dip or RC Cola anymore) and no more cool NWA Kickball hats. Everything else is frozen in time, in a really good way."

As a mom of a junior player as well as a brand new pee wee, I can tell you that as "Keep Austin Weird" as NWA Kickball seems, it is something special. I encourage you to come out to watch a game,

any night between now and end of May. Grab some treats at the concession stand and cheer on our Allandale girls as they kick their way through another fun season.

And if you played NWA Kickball as a girl, we'd love to hear your story! Please share your memories on the Allandale Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/allandale.ATX>. ❖

Find us on Facebook



ANA now has a Facebook page. There will be some cross-posting from our ANA website, www.allandalereporter.com, but not everyone visits that daily. We're hoping to catch more individuals by having more than one source of information. We'll be posting updates on neighborhood activities as well as links to events that affect our membership. Keep up to date on goings on by liking us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/allandale-ATX>. ❖

David Starry, Realtor



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The Allandale Gardener – Vegetable Gardening Tips

Sarah Herman

Spring is here! The gardening possibilities are endless this time of year, but nothing is as practical or fun as growing your own vegetables. With relatively little investment of time and money, you can grow your own food. Growing your own food fosters a sense of independence and self-sufficiency and allows you to try your hand at gardening without over-committing to a huge landscaping undertaking. If you've ever thought of giving it a try, now is the time. Here are some tips for getting started:

Start small: Not sure you'll like gardening? Keep a few container gardens on your patio and give it a try. This doesn't have to be an expensive hobby: five-gallon buckets with holes drilled at the bottom along with a thin layer of gravel or pebbles to promote drainage is an easy and cost-effective way to try out vegetable gardening.

Grow food you like to eat: This sounds obvious, but it's easy to get too excited at the number of options at the nursery and buy vegetable starts for foods that you aren't that excited to eat. Sure, radishes are easy to grow and mature rather quickly, but if they aren't something you would buy at the grocery store, perhaps they aren't the best thing to plant in your experimental vegetable garden.

Add compost: Make sure to amend your soil with compost. Don't skimp on this! The best gardens have the best soil, so it's important to add high-quality compost. Perhaps eventually you'll make your own compost, but in the meantime there are plenty of local sources (nurseries, landscaping supply stores, or friendly neighbors) where you can obtain high quality compost to give your vegetable plants the nutrients they need.

Water your plants: The easiest and most efficient way to water your garden is to set up a drip-irrigation system. Low cost timers and hoses can be obtained from most home-improvement and gardening stores and can be set up in just a few hours. The result is fool-proof watering method that respects this precious resource here in Central Texas and allows your plants to be watered consistently and evenly, without your constant attention and with little to no water wasted.

Watch out for pests: It is almost inevitable that your thriving garden will be the scene of various critters looking for a meal. Consider using netting or hardware cloth to create a barrier from larger pests, and keep an eye out for signs of distress on your plants from insects. Most of these critters can be deterred naturally. You don't have to use harsh chemicals!

Don't forget flowers: Pair vegetables with beneficial flowers that attract pollinators and deter pests. Ask the nursery when purchasing your vegetable transplants what flowers are compatible for your edible garden.

Get inspired: Local nurseries and gardening shops will have plenty of displays of various ways you can work vegetable gardens into your landscaping. Don't forget about Pinterest either. A garden can be as simple as leftover bricks preventing the grass from overtaking a few tomato plants or as fancy as a gorgeous raised bed garden kit that is the centerpiece of the backyard. This hobby is what

you make of it!

Learn from your neighbors: Our neighbors are a wealth of knowledge as evidenced by the lovely gardens that can be spotted while meandering around our neighborhood. We hope to showcase willing neighbors and their gardens (both vegetable and ornamental alike) in this newsletter to inspire and encourage this lovely pastime. No garden is too big or small! Interested in having your garden on display in this newsletter? Please email us at allandalegardener@gmail.com. ❖



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Gullett Good News

Debbie Trominski

Gullett is a school like no other place and this spring has been filled with lots of activity. Just before spring break the Geckos took a break from classroom learning and enjoyed Sports Day, which was filled with races, games and friendly competition. When asked about Sports Day, one first grader's response was "I really liked it!" Particular favorites were the sno-cones and snacks that the students were able to purchase as a fundraiser for the school. Many thanks go to the numerous volunteers who made Sports Day a success.

Our Geckos and their friends, families and teachers deserve a big high five for bringing in \$32,437.16 in donations for the 2014 BookSpring Read-A-Thon. BookSpring raises money to provide books for children and families who don't have books of their own. Gullett, through the leadership of librarian Kay Gooch, has been deeply involved in this effort for many years. In fact, Gullett has been a top fundraiser in the district over

the past six years and has been the top fundraiser for five of those years. Some of the teachers will be dancing on the roof of the library in early May as a reward for the Geckos' hard work and dedication to this great cause. Congratulations to Gullett for your extraordinary achievement!

Each grade has been enjoying spring field trips. The fifth grade's highly anticipated three-day trip to Outdoor School was postponed into early April after freezing weather prevented them from camping during the first week of March. The third grade enjoyed a day at Inner Space Caverns in late March that was described as being "Pretty fun, actually," by one of the students.

As spring continues to bloom, keep a lookout for wildflowers that may be



Gullett third graders take a break between Sports Day events.

sprouting in unexpected places around the campus. On the first day of spring the students in Creative Action, an after-school program at Gullett, sprinkled wildflower seeds wherever the students thought it would be fun to see flowers bloom. This should be interesting!

New! The Gullett Dad's Group (GDG) is here. The GDG is an informal gathering of, you guessed it, Gullett dads to get out and socialize in a relaxed environment. Although the group was launched by moms to give the dads a little nudge, the dads have it under control. The first meeting took place on April 3 at Austin Beerworks and was described by a dad as

"Good times." Any and all Gullett dads are invited. Meetings are posted at the school's calendar of events at gullettgeckos.com or just ask a Gullett mom and she'll likely know.

As we look to summer, Gullett has many opportunities for Geckos to stay sharp and keep busy. This summer there will be over 30 fun, hands-on, fantastic camps available. Spaces fill up quickly so go to gullettgeckos.com for more information on registering your child.

Upcoming Events:

Friday, April 18 – School holiday, no school for students or staff

Friday, April 25 – Fine Arts Extravaganza, Gullett campus (time TBA)

May 5 – May 9 – Teacher Appreciation Week

Monday, May 26 – Memorial Day Holiday, no school for students or staff

Thursday, June 5 – Last day of classes for students

Thursday, June 5 – After school pool party at Northwest Park, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. ❖

Dog Talk: Metronidazole

Cheryl Silver, csilver2@austin.rr.com, 512-454-7219

Metronidazole: that certainly is a mouthful! To pronounce it you can break it up like this: metro-ni-da-zole. This is the generic name of a medication that is also known as "Flagyl." It is actually a human drug that is very often prescribed for dogs (I don't know about cats, sorry).

This medication is an antibiotic that is also an anti-inflammatory (in some circumstances), and anti-diarrheal, as well as an anti-protozoal. Some bacteria and some protozoa grow only in environments where there is no oxygen (i.e. they are anaerobic) and it is against these organisms that metronidazole is particularly effective. Inflammatory bowel disease, colitis, and periodontal problems are often treated with this drug and possibly in combination with other medications. **Of course, there is much more to be said about when it is prescribed– I am just offering a broad overview.**

(An aside: Some people are wary of anything they consider a "drug" and they only want to use "natural" treatments. Metronidazole and many other medications can save your dog– do not avoid

using them for your dog's health.)

You might wonder why I selected this topic for the "Dog Talk" column this month. Well, there are several reasons but the most immediate one is that this medication was recently prescribed for one of my beloved dogs, Sully. Having had dogs for many, many years, this was not the first time this drug had been prescribed. It was often used when one of my dogs would have diarrhea or yucky poop and it always did the trick.

Since I know this medication is fairly frequently prescribed I figured I would share our recent experience.

Sooo ... Sully's was clearly not "right" and he really was not interested in his food. My wonderful veterinarian did a great job of diagnostics including an x-ray that revealed that Sully had swallowed one of those twist ties that are used to seal tortilla packages (how does that happen?), but a fecal sample revealed a problematic bacterium in his gut. We concluded that the twist tie was in a loop and likely to just go right through him

Continued on page 14



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Dog Talk: Metronidazole !!!

Continued from page 13

(which it did), but metronidazole was prescribed for the bacterium.

After a day or so I didn't feel like things were getting better: Sully seemed lethargic, was coughing, did some gagging (a sign of nausea), and I noticed he was licking his lips a lot (another sign of nausea). Then I had a brilliant idea (note the sarcasm here). I decided to actually read the material about the drug that is provided by the pharmacist! Amazing how helpful that can be! Yep, right there in black and white was just the information I needed when it came to possible side effects of the medication. Everything I was seeing in Sully was laid out there as a possible side effect. It all made sense. I also learned that it may take a few days for the side effects to disappear once the course of treatment is over. So, I com-

pleted the treatment and Sully is just fine.

Now, perhaps you are a person who reads everything that is given to you. I often do but in this instance I had used this medication a number of times with other dogs and never saw these side effects. But, each dog is different and I learned that well in this instance. Once the medication was gone, the side effects faded in a few days and all was well ... and I learned a lesson.

As I mentioned earlier, this is a fairly commonly used drug because it really does the trick, so you may find yourself bringing some home one day. Oh, and remember, this is a very bitter drug and it tastes terrible and makes other foods taste awful, too, so hide it well when you give it! Liverwurst is great for hiding it!

Final comment— I am not a veterinarian



and I am not a vet tech. I urge you to talk with your veterinarian at any time should you have concerns or questions about your dog's health status or response to a medication. ❖

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Neighborhood Watch

Laura DiCarlo

Since the February newsletter there have been 13 Burglary of Residences (BORs), 24 Burglary of Vehicles (BOVs), continued graffiti removal, a block captain training, a letter written to the Austin Police Department (APD) and City Council urging them to bring back a graffiti detective, and a Take10 Compression Only CPR class held at NW Recreation Center organized by the Allandale Neighborhood Association Safety Committee. There have also been suspicious activity and possible scams discussed on the Allandale listserv.

BORs occurred on Marilyn, Cary Drive, Bull Creek, McElroy, Cavileer, Oakmont, Shady Glade Court, Great Northern Boulevard, Wynona (attempted), Lexington, Janey, and Shoalmont. In many of these cases bicycles were stolen, and there have been reports of stolen bikes in surrounding neighborhoods as well. In one case thieves broke into a locked garage and stole two road bikes and a mountain bike. Computers, tools and GPS systems were stolen in several

A man canvassed
Rickey the week
before purporting
to be an energy
auditor for the
City of Austin

cases, but were more associated with BOVs. Please be on the lookout and always store bikes locked. BOVs were reported on Hancock, Yellowpine Terrace, Lawnmont, Foster Lane, Northcross, Westfield Drive, Shoal Creek, Pinecrest, North Loop, West Frances Place, Twin Oaks, and Wynona.

By the time this newsletter is published there will have been an APD Region 1 Commander's Forum on Tuesday April 1, at McCallum High School, to share information and talk about community concerns with residents and business owners. Topics will have included crime statistics as well as a question and answer session with the District Representatives and Command Staff.

Due to the proliferation of graffiti along Burnet Road, at the pony fields, and all over Allandale, the safety committee will be setting a date for a graffiti cleanup soon. Our APD District Representatives, officers Jud Chapman and Josh Metteauer, will be present as well. Thanks to the city for providing paint and other supplies.

Please be on the lookout – I received word from a block captain on March 25 that a man canvassed Rickey the week before purporting to be an energy auditor for the City of Austin. One neighbor let him in as he was wearing a bright orange vest that looked official. The neighbor made an appointment for an energy audit and when the guy didn't showed up at the designated time, the neighbor called the City and was told that COA doesn't go door to door, and that it was probably a scam to see inside his house. The same guy went to other homes and was reported to the police. He was a tall white male with dark hair and beard. He was seen walking down Rickey later on the March 25 with a smaller African American male.

A similarly odd case was found on the same day when a man was seen going in and out of people's carports.

As always, please contact me at lbdicarlo@yahoo.com or 512-529-1701 if you are interested in becoming a block captain, patrol, or graffiti remover. Thanks! ❖



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Get Peached in the Hood

Laura Beck

Another of Austin's favorite food brands is making its permanent home on Burnet Road! I've said it before and I'll say it again: WE are the new South Congress! Come fall, The Peached Tortilla will open its first brick and mortar location, at 5520 Burnet Road, taking over the south side of the Austin Plumbing Supply building, right next to Hey Cupcake! More great food in the neighborhood!

The full service mobile caterer focuses on Southern-Asian influenced food – a mirror of founder Eric Silverstein himself: born in Tokyo influenced by Asian cuisine and moving to Atlanta at age 10 to add in Southern fare. The name is a nod to Georgia (Peach!) and Texas and Mexican cuisine (Tortilla).

Since starting with one food truck in late 2010, the Peached Tortilla has built a great reputation and huge fan base, growing a thriving catering business and putting on raved-about pop up dinners. They just finished a really busy SXSW helping celebrate the opening of the Tom's retail store and making Snoop Dog's favorite late

night snacks, among many other activities.

The Peached Tortilla's director of Business Development, Hope Furst, chatted with me about the Allandale restaurant when I visited the food truck on its Tuesday night stop at the Draught House (Draft Horse? How many names does that place have?) at 4112 Medical Parkway. (Go grab a bite, every Tuesday, beginning at 6:00 p.m.).

Hope said when The Peached Tortilla restaurant opens this fall, the menu will be a bit different from the food truck, which is mostly "street fare" food, tacos and sliders. The restaurant will start just serving dinner and will have more plated choices and gourmet offerings. There will also be a full bar with craft cocktails.



Consider this a place for a grown up night out, neighbors! The space will also serve as a permanent kitchen for the catering business and trucks.

Don't worry, the restaurant will surely have lots of the things that has made The Peached Tortilla famous, like the awesome brisket they braise for four hours, paired with creamy apple slaw and smoky roasted peach BBQ sauce. The Banh Mi combines braised pork belly, pickled dannon carrot, sriracha mayo, and cilantro and is awesome in both tacos and sliders. I can't wait to try the Japa Jam burger, which comes with a fried egg, as well as



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sweet tomato jam, jalapeno jack cheese, BBQ sauce and Fireman's #4 tempura battered onion strings.

But my absolute fave? The Bacon Jam fries, Belgian fries tossed with house made bacon jam, fried egg, sriracha mayo, and green onions. Amazing. Stupid Good, as Hope says. She's right.

Why Allandale? Eric and Hope love all we love about Burnet Road, and Eric is a neighbor, living in Allandale himself. Until we have the restaurant opening, follow where The Peached Tortilla truck is on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/peachedtortilla> or on Twitter @peachedtortilla. Catering gigs can be booked, and other info found, on the website: <http://thepeachedtortilla.com/>. I can't wait to #GetPeached regularly right in Allandale! ❖

The Annual Allandale Garage Sale is coming!

Time to bring out your 8-track tapes, pet rocks, VCRs, old text books, grandma's teapot cozies and any other precious past heirlooms that are no longer utilized. This event draws many people to the neighborhood for a day of bargain shopping due to the easy proximity of the sales. Take advantage of this opportunity to shed yourself of unwanted items and gain space for new acquisitions!

The Allandale Neighborhood Association will be sponsoring its annual garage sale on Saturday, May 3, from 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. The event will be advertised, we'll create a Google Map with the locations of the participating garage sales, and free yard signs for ANA members will be provided. This is just one of the

services that the ANA offers to its members. ANA Membership is only \$15 per year (\$7 over age 55), with all proceeds going to support neighborhood activities. To sign up for the garage sale, contact Cynthia Pryor at 512-797-3587 or cpryor55@gmail.com.

Finally, if you have personal treasures you'd like to get rid of but don't have enough stuff or time to make it worth your while to hold your own garage sale, please consider donating it to the ANA, will have a garage sale table at the southeast corner of Lamar Middle School (across from St. John's). All proceeds will go to the ANA to support neighborhood activities. Please contact Cynthia in advance if you would like to donate items. ❖

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Birders in Allandale

Continued from front page

Charles on Fairlane

Charles' interest in birds goes back to growing up in the Rio Grande Valley surrounded by orchards and ranch land, where he'd spend hours observing species like the green jay, as well as various warblers, swallows, sparrows, and doves until the sounding of the ranch bell told him it was time for dinner. He moved to Austin in the mid-80s for high school and college.

While attending college, Charles took an informal introductory birding course taught by former Allandale residents Fred and Maria Webster, which put his childhood interest in birds to a full-fledged passion.

"I've met and gotten to know legendary Texas birder Victor Emmanuel and he



Goldfinch

and his company have really inspired me." Charles says. "I've been a member of the Travis Audubon Society (<http://travis-audubon.org/>) for more than 17 years and used to lead many walks. I heard they used to have a volunteer lead bird walks in Northwest Park. I hope to be able lead again and restart bird walks in Northwest Park and nearby areas in the very near future."

Charles' passion for birds has taken him as far away as Thailand. He and his family usually camp every summer in a different state to view nature. But mostly he stays close to home or to his Rio Grande roots.

High Island near Galveston is a favorite April destination because it's the first rest stop for a whole host of migratory birds such as the warblers, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, buntings, hummingbirds, hawks, and tons of shorebirds.

"So many birds take off from the Yucatan Peninsula in a given night that

they can be detected by land based coastal radars as they are approaching the coast the next morning after an all-night flight! Some birds lose half of their body mass in that feat."

Austin's winter affair with the goldfinch has just ended, but we have a host of other natives, including lesser goldfinches, house finches, purple martins, Carolina chickadees, black-crested titmice, Carolina wrens, cliff swallows, barn swallows, and flocks of monk parakeets that made the transformers on Koenig Lane their home.

The monk parakeet—also known as the Quaker parrot—started out as pets that escaped their cages and now fly free all over town. They can also be found around the Walgreens at Burnet Road and Koenig up in the cell phone tower.

Unlike their migratory cousins, the house finch is a common sight at Charles' house; they're here all year long.



House Finch

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First exams are complimentary for pets adopted from shelters or rescue groups within 2 weeks of adoption.

He's also seen red-bellied woodpeckers, eastern screech and great horned owls, red-tailed hawks, and both Austin hummingbirds: the black-chinned and the ruby-throated.

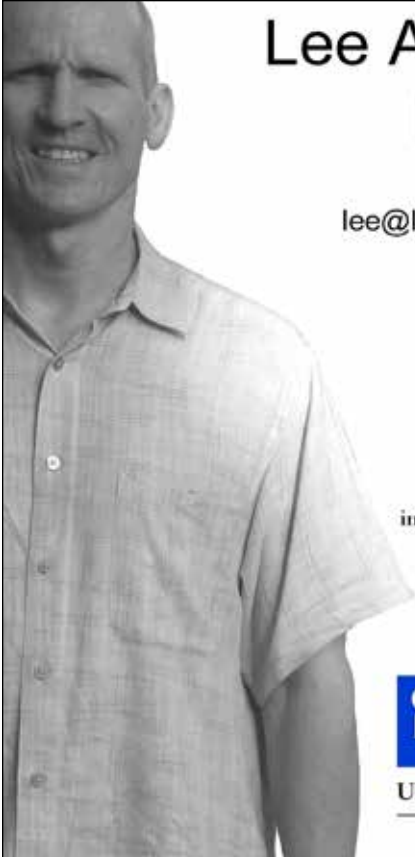
We can't forget the blue jay and the doves: white-winged, mourning, and Inca, although they can sometimes be a nuisance (especially to other birds). And finally, arguably Austin's most famous bird, the golden-cheeked warbler, still on the endangered species list—victims of Texas' unquenchable desire for housing and businesses, which leads to fragmentation of their breeding habitat.



Red-bellied woodpecker

"Whatever they are, I love them all," Charles says, and it's obvious he means it.

Continued on page 20



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Birders in Allandale

Continued from page 19



Great horned owl

Susan Backhaus on Dover Place

Susan was a kindergarten teacher at Gullett Elementary when she was first introduced to the world of birds. Her

mentor, Bonnie Turek, and a neighborhood grand-dad, Mr. Martin, inspired her with their wealth of knowledge that she, in turn, taught school children in science class.

Susan says, "We had a large aviary, created by our animal-loving principal, Dr. Crowe, right outside our classroom, with peacocks, turkeys, ducks of every variety, and chickens. The children spent a lot of time with clipboards in hand drawing and observing bird behavior."

Having retired from full-time teaching, Susan holds bird watching camps during spring break and summer to share her love of birds with neighborhood children. She also puts four kinds of seed out and has bird baths and berry plants to attract as many as possible.

Susan has many bird houses that occasionally bring nesting couples. She says that right now, while the leaves are off the trees, is the best time of year to spot birds. Susan recommends keeping a bird guide handy to help in identifying those unusual birds that cross your path.

Susan also has a bird call reference. She

says, "It's so fun to see if I can name a bird just by listening!"

Alan Cable from the Great Northern area

Alan and his wife have fallen in love with owls (literally) at their house bordering Great Northern.

"We had a family of screech owls living in a dead tree, and one of the babies fell on the ground from about 30 feet up. My wife called Austin Wildlife Rescue, and they said if she could put the owl back in the nest, to try it. The mama owl was not having any of that so my wife took the baby in a shoe box out to them, and they took it." Later that day, two more babies lay on the ground. The tree was too old, and was falling apart, and any time a strong gust of wind came through, it would shiver the shelter where the mama had nested.

Alan and his wife obtained an owl box from Austin Wildlife Rescue but the tree was too old to hold it so they hung the own box on another tree about five feet away. "The following year, the owls came

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Cedar waxwings in Susan's back yard

back, and we got to watch them grow and fly around. Pretty cool." Alan says. "But later in the year, a hive of bees moved into the owl box and stung our dog. So we had to have it removed. We were real worried what would happen this owl mating season. Two weeks ago, my wife saw the mama owl; she had no place in our yard to have her babies."

Alan took a gamble and it paid off. He built another owl box in the same location as the previous one and, within two days, the owls were back! They're looking forward to another family of owls this year and hopefully many years to come.

Sharon Boni on Pinecrest

Sharon is like most of us— a bird lover, but no expert. "I can tell a cardinal from a dove and that's about it," she says somewhat modestly.

Sharon put up a couple of bird feeders in her yard a few years back and it's been a love affair ever since. "Of course, the squirrels get a lot of the seed," she chuckles, resigning herself to that fact. Her feeders draw cardinals, blue jays, and many, many doves.

She once watched a couple of screech owls playing in her bird bath, a delightful nighttime sight. One time as she was driving down Airport Boulevard, she noticed people sitting in sling chairs in the Highland Mall parking lot. She stopped and found out that the occasion was the annual purple martin migration.

The annual migration in July through mid-August draws tens to hundreds of thousands of birds every night, estimates the Austin Audubon Society. Apparently there's a group of trees in the parking lot that draws them, and a lot of curious Austinites as well.

Whether it's following a winged migration, traveling the world to see them, or simply enjoying them in your back yard, our friends the birds are a welcome part of everyday life in Allandale. Whether you got interested in birds because of children or the influence of a mentor, or maybe because you just like them, it's a good idea to take a moment and notice their graceful flight and encouraging songs. They're our neighbors also. ❖

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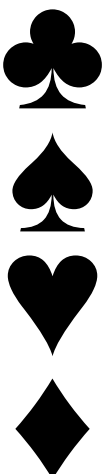
ALLANDALE AREA 2013 PROPERTY SALES IN REVIEW

	2012	2013
TOTAL TRANSACTIONS	115	110
AVG LIST PRICE	\$351,469	\$388,581
AVG SALES PRICE	\$344,411	\$386,992
AVG SQ FT OF SOLD PROPERTIES	1821 SQ FT	1785 SQ FT
AVG DAYS ON MARKET	38 DAYS	18 DAYS

All statistics & square footage are from Austin MLS for single family residence as of January 1, 2014. For detailed market information about your home contact Lisa Harrell, Broker.



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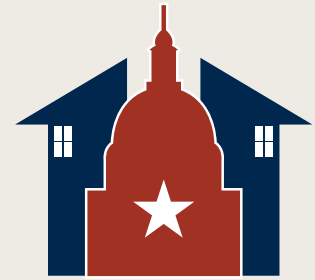


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“Before You Sign” – Deed Restrictions 101

Continued from front page

Q: Doesn’t the restriction apply only to original owners?

A: No. The restrictions “run with the land,” meaning they continue to apply to the properties, even when properties change hands. This information is provided to new purchasers upon a property’s closing.

Q: Why am I asked to sign anything?

A: Some restrictions allow for re-subdivisions if a set percentage (such two-thirds of all homeowners in the Shoalmont subdivision, for example) of all property owners within the particular subdivision

agrees to the re-subdivision of the property in question.

Q: Hasn’t subdividing properties been going on for a long time in Allandale?

A: Some lots are already subdivided, although in the early 1980s Allandale underwent a rollback to single-family (“SF”) zoning to address future subdivisions, and to conform to the City’s zoning provisions for Allandale with deed restrictions, as most of the deed restrictions were “single family residential use only.” While there are examples of subdivided lots, part of the SF zoning effort

was aimed at preserving characteristics of the neighborhood, including lot sizes.

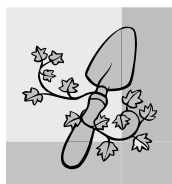
Q: What do proponents and opponents say?

A: Below is a chart of common positions on the issue.

Q: Where can I find out more information?

A: The Allandale Neighborhood Association’s Zoning Committee is happy to discuss these issues. Please contact Bryan Glass at bsg22cam@gmail.com, Naji Norder at nsn70@norder.net, or Nathan Vassar at nathan.vassar@gmail.com. ❖

Common Positions Regarding Subdivisions of Allandale Property Lots	
What Proponents Say (for subdividing)	What Opponents Say (against subdividing)
Property Owner should decide what to do with her property.	Property Owners are bound by the deed restrictions that they are made aware of before purchasing Allandale property.
A neighbor wishing to divide her property is a property owner and neighbor just like you.	This is not always the case. Often, purchasers of Allandale properties buy the land as developers, with the intent of subdividing the property. Nonetheless, the same restrictions apply to long-time residents as they do to new developers.
Some types of subdivisions are better than others, and won’t negatively impact the character of surrounding properties or the neighborhood.	Certainly each property is different, although the reason the restrictions were enacted in the first place and the SF zoning was put in place in the early 1980s, was to preserve a <i>community</i> character. Further, there is no guarantee that a proposed subdivided development will be as benign as advertised to the neighbors.
The rules against subdividing property were enacted in a different time. Austin is growing and is very different now.	The deed restrictions continue to serve an important purpose in our community. Allandale is a unique neighborhood in part because of rules that allow for walkable streets, limited traffic, and reduced congestion.



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CORRECTION:

In the October issue of the Allandale Neighbor, the article about composting suggested using biodegradable bags to keep compost from becoming messy. However, we have since learned that the City of Austin does NOT accept compost in bags, even biodegradable ones.

Celebrate Allandale: Love It. Protect It.

The Allandale Neighborhood Association (ANA) depends on your annual membership & participation to stay a strong local group. Help us represent your interests by getting involved.

New ☐, Renewal ☐

Name _____

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E-mail _____

Membership rates: ☐ \$15 per household, ☐ \$7 senior rate

Which Committee would you like to join?

- ☐ Bylaws ☐ Membership ☐ Planning & Zoning
☐ Communications ☐ Nominating
☐ Finance ☐ Safety

Please make checks payable to: ANA ■ PO Box 10886

■ Austin, TX 78766-1886 ■ Or pay online at: www.allandaleneighbor.com

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Allandale Neighborhood Association

Annual Neighborhood-Wide Garage Sale

Saturday, May 3, 2014 • 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

How to participate:

- Send your name, address, phone#, email, and a short list of your sale items to: cpryor55@gmail.com
- Deadline to be included in ads: Saturday, April 19
- ANA member? Free yard sign for you! (Allandale residents can join or renew via paypal at allandaleneighbor.com)
- Set up your sale on May 3rd by 7:00 & pack up at 2:00

Locations & items will be advertised:

- Google map • Craigslist Austin • ANA website • Facebook
- Local neighborhood Yahoo listservs

ANA garage sale table:

- S.E. corner of Lamar Middle School (across from St. John's)
- ANA will gladly accept donated items; all proceeds support neighborhood activities. Contact event coordinators in advance.
- Between 2:00 & 4:00, everything at the ANA table will be marked 50% off! Whatever doesn't sell will be donated to charity.

Questions?

- Contact ANA Garage Sale Event Coordinators, Cynthia Pryor (cpryor55@gmail.com, 512-797-3587) or Laura Slaughter (laura_slaughter@hotmail.com, 512-825-2288).